

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 have been examined. Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Also, the Examiner has indicated that claims 2-8 contain allowable subject matter.

Preliminary Matters

The Examiner has objected to the title as not being indicative of an illustrative embodiment of the invention. Accordingly, Applicant has rewritten the title, and submits that the title should not be construed to limit the scope of the claims.

In addition, the Examiner has objected to the Abstract due to the length and the form of the reference numerals. Accordingly, Applicant has amended the Abstract, and submits that such amendments overcome the objection.

Also, the Examiner has not acknowledged the drawings filed on March 20, 2000. Accordingly, respectfully requests the Examiner to indicate, in the next Office Action, whether such drawings are acceptable.

Newly Added Claims

Applicant has added new claims 9 and 10 to provide more varied protection of the present invention. Applicant submits that claims 9 and 10 are patentable for at least analogous reasons as claim 2.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner has rejected claim 1 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5, 716, 148 to Tamagaki et al. ("Tamagaki"). However, since claim 1 has been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, Applicant submits that the rejection of such claim is now moot.

Allowable Subject Matter

As stated previously, the Examiner has indicated that claims 2-8 contain allowable subject matter. Since Applicant has rewritten claim 2 into independent form, Applicant submits that claims 2-8 are now in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,



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